

There do not appear to be many specific records of this lizard catching birds though I understand that it is commonly known to take eggs and nestlings of the smaller species.

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14. OCCURRENCE OF THE PHOORSA, *ECHIS CARINATA*  
(SCHNEIDER) ALONG THE MALABAR COAST  
SOUTH OF KARWAR

According to Smith [(1943) FAUNA OF BRITISH INDIA, REPTILIA AND AMPHIBIA 3, SERPENTES] the Phoorsa, *Echis carinata* (Schneider) (Malayalam : Churutta) is a common snake, inhabiting the whole of India south of the Ganges but absent from Bengal and the coast strip west of the Western Ghats, south of Karwar. It is well known as a desert-loving snake. The Bengal and Malabar coasts get an abundant supply of rain, which would naturally act as a barrier to the entry of *E. carinata* into these areas. However, the snake is not altogether absent along the Malabar Coast, being fairly common in arid hilly regions especially from November to March, and rare or even absent in the plains. One specimen was collected at Devagiri (300 ft.=90 m. above sea-level), Calicut, Malabar. Its lepidosis is:

Costals at three head-lengths behind the neck	...	23
Costals at midbody	...	25
Costals at three head-lengths in front of the vent		23
Ventral shields	...	139
Subcaudals (single)	...	28
Anal	...	1

DEPARTMENT OF ZOOLOGY,  
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DEVAGIRI, KOVUR, CALICUT,  
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[Enquiry at the State Museum and the Zoo at Trivandrum and Trichur, and the Government Museum, Madras, reveals that they have no specimens from this area.—EDS.]